

has been rarely noticed in Scotland. It appears, however, that in Germany it often causes great destruction in the forests.

6. "On the Occurrence of the Seeds of Bearded Darnel in inferior samples of Wheat," by George S. Lawson, Esq.

7. "Notes on *Pinus Cephalonica* and other Coniferæ, at Craigo House, Montrose," by Mr. P. S. Robertson.

Mr. Robertson read a notice of a large number of plants of *Pinus Cephalonica*, which are growing at Craigo House, about three miles from the sea, on dry sandy soil which overlies soft freestone rock, and in the vicinity of limestone. The trees had been raised from seed and planted about eighteen years ago. They appeared to be in perfect health, making growths of 12 to 15 inches each year; a good many having now attained to 12 and 15 feet in height.

Mr. Lowe made some verbal remarks on the effects of lightning upon Larch-trees. During the violent storm which occurred on the 7th of August last, a larch-tree, standing in a field at the west end of the village of Fortingal, was struck by lightning. Commencing about a yard from the summit, the electric fluid passed in a spiral direction down the trunk, making five-and-a-half coils in its descent, and peeling off the bark to the breadth of five or six inches. Half-way down the tree the current appears to have been divided by an intervening branch, and from this point the spiral coil is double, diverging as it nears the base, where one of the currents has passed into the earth to the west and the other to the east side, after having thrown down a portion of stone wall which opposed its progress. At the point of entrance of this current the earth was torn up, and a large opening left. Another larch, about a mile to the east of Fortingal, was struck in a similar manner and on the same evening.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Observations on the Pteropus of Australia.

By J. K. E. FAIRHOLME.

THE acquisition of a Flying Fox to the Gardens of the Society, induces me to bring before your notice a few observations I have made on the habits of this animal in the country about Moreton Bay, on the east coast of Australia, about lat. 27° south.

The flying fox is well known even in the southern parts of Australia in the summer months; but by far the largest flights are seen in the warmer latitudes. The attention is generally attracted to them (just as daylight disappears) by the heavy flapping sound of their wings, as they fly in great numbers overhead; all in the same direction. These flights often continue to pass for many hours together on the way to their feeding-places, generally about the banks of rivers, where the tree known as the Flooded-gum grows, on the leaves of which they feed. Though scattered over a large extent of country while feeding at night, they all contrive to assemble again to spend the heat of the day together, and when the flight is large, the scene

of congregation is most extraordinary. I am fortunate enough to have known two of these places of assembly—one on a small island in Moreton Bay, covered with dense scrub or jungle; another in the scrub, close to my former residence, about forty miles inland from the Bay. In the latter spot the scrub consists of the usual undergrowth of smaller trees, mixed with *bush ropes*, or lianes, and overtopped by enormous Moreton Bay pine-trees (*Araucaria Cunninghami*). On the nearly horizontal branches of the pines, as well as on the lower trees around, the flying foxes hang in vast numbers. I can never forget my astonishment as I approached this spot for the first time, being taken to it for the purpose of shooting some of the animals for the natives. The space occupied by the flight was, as near as I could judge, about 400 or 500 yards square, and in this, every tree was more or less loaded with them, all hanging with their heads downwards, and uttering a sound difficult to describe, but not unlike that of young rooks when crying for food. All that were not snarling and fighting for places, were steadily fanning themselves with their wings half extended as they hung. On our approach, most of those nearest to us took to flight, only to alight again on the next tree, or to wheel round and round in the air above the spot. On my firing a shot, the din increased, and continued to such an extent, that after I had shot what the blacks required, I was glad to get away from it. Many had young ones clinging to them, and suckling at the breast. This flight met in the same spot for several days, and then disappeared. The flesh of the flying fox is like that of a rabbit in appearance, but is strongly flavoured by the food on which the animal feeds.

On the coast of Moreton Bay the natives live principally on fish, and the arrival of the flying foxes on the little island of St. Helena is hailed by them as a change of diet. The flights only appear in the warmer months of the year, even in lat. 26°, and most likely migrate into the tropical latitudes during the colder months, like many of our Australian birds.

At Moreton Bay there is no difficulty in procuring any number of young flying foxes, as the island on which they congregate is close to the anchorage for ships.—*Proc. Zool. Soc.* July 22, 1856.

On the Metamorphoses of Trachys pygmæa. By M. LEPRIEUR.

Most of the known larvæ of the *Buprestidæ*, the family of Beetles to which *Trachys pygmæa* belongs, live in the interior of the trunks of trees, feeding on the woody tissue. Those of the present species were discovered between the two laminæ of the epidermis of the leaves of some Malvaceous plants; they devoured the parenchyma, leaving the epidermis untouched, in the same way as the Lepidopterous and Dipterous leaf-miners. In this way they form a sort of dwelling resembling an inflated vesicle, in which they undergo their transformations.

Amongst the numerous researches made by Réaumur into the history of many of the leaf-mining larvæ, some refer to Coleopterous